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Generate Collection

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TITLE: Computer-based communication system and method using metadata defining a control-structure

Detailed Description Text (52):

The Recipient class 120 is used to determine the distribution of a communications object. Each communications object 110 is associated with one or more recipients 120 who receive an instance of the object when it is first created or when changes are made to it. Recipients are of two types: consumer programs 22, or distribution servers 32. A distribution server 32 may also be represented by a distribution service object. Distribution service objects are further discussed below. Transfer of communications objects 110 to both types of recipients is typically via the push technique. However recipients may also be tracked in the provider database 11 even if they use the pull technique of updating via the use of receipt acknowledgment messages. Acknowledgment messages are further described below. The push method may involve a fully automated transfer via a communications network 3, or it may involve a manual transfer such as a file copy over a network or via a computer floppy disk. Recipient objects 120 include the attributes necessary to generate and transmit an instance of the communications object to the recipient. To uniquely identify recipients even when names change, a SystemID attribute can be used in addition to a Name attribute. System IDs are discussed below. Other attributes include the recipient's communications network address, such as an e-mail address, the type of encoding that should be used (e.g. MIME, BinHex, UUencoding, etc.), and the maximum attachment file size the recipient can accept (to determine if multiple attachments need to be sent). Recipients 120 have an association with methods 141 in order to allow different methods to be assigned to different recipients. An example is the communications object's update method. Communications objects transmitted to consumers via e-mail push may use one update method, while those transmitted to distribution servers may use a pull update method. Encoding methods, transmission methods, and other recipient-specific methods may also be assigned in this manner.